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THE SIX DAYS' MISSION IN MANCHESTER.

LAST week was a week of missions. Not missions of the "Greenland's icy mountains" pattern, nor any of the missions of "women," but a sort of revival of a respectable kind at churches, where select clergymen were brought to lend enchantment to the scene by preaching to such congregations as could, by hook or by crook, be gathered together. The original proposition was, we believe, to have had the mission services in all the churches in Manchester; but as the thing had been done elsewhere with some success—factitious, temporary, or permanent, we don't know — by some of the "High" school, the Bishop of St. Ann's Square interfered, and so the ordinance was confined to six churches, situate in thickly peopled parts, not, as a rule, inconveniently crowded during the ordinary ministrations with the dwellers in the neighbourhood, or, in more polite language, the nobility, gentry, and inhabitants of the vicinity.

Every plan was tried to make the services attractive. The Act of Uniformity was treated with nearly as much indignity as commercial men bestow on the Statute of Frauds; the "wicked man" was put in a corner for the nonce; a new book of offices on the plan of the Unitarian breviary, with "first" and "second" services, was compiled from the Litany and the Commination service, and all went merry as a passing bell. The plan of the services seemed to be this:—Nothing was done in the mornings, except perhaps a Communion service at seven or eight o'clock, nor in the afternoons, all the people being at work, or being supposed to be; and at night the ordinary evening service was got through in a statutory and prefunctory manner. Then the bells were rung again for about half an hour, during which time the rector, curate, and paid and volunteer staff and their friends went about generally in the smaller streets in the district, calling at dwelling houses, and even accosting passers-by in the streets, inviting them to come to the mission-service. In some cases they succeeded in drawing in a considerable number of people who do not often see the inside of a place of worship of any kind.

"They're only a copyin' hus," said a Hallelujah Bandsman. A conscientious and particular Baptist said it was "nobbut a Revival preachin," like the same as they had. An enthusiastic Wesleyan declared that they were only doing what John Wesley had been doing for most of his life; while a disdainful Roman Catholic inquired if none of them were acquainted with the various preaching orders of his church, who had gone about the country holding revival meetings hundreds of years before Baptists or Wesleyans were heard of. "Whereupon," as the lawyers say, "issue was joined," and we left them at it.

The hour being supposed to have arrived, the service was begun by one of the clergy, usually the rector, reading the few prayers at the beginning of the new book. This was followed by a hymn or two from the dozen at the end. This little book shows at a glance one of the present wants, defects, at all events, of the Church of England. There is no elasticity in the services, and there is an apparent impossibility of varying them. In every church, it must be either morning or evening service, matins or "evensong;" and the latest, and to all appearance, the only concession, that can be made is, that after you have duly had your "evensong," you may have any other service you like, but it must be made up out of the Prayer Book. In the present dead-lock between the Evangelicals and the Orthodox, it seems, by common consent, considered impossible to prepare a collection of offices or special services for occasional use that would be accepted by each party. So until high and low are disposed of, no one can score "game," or even, as Dick Swiveller would say, "two for his heels." By an equal consent, however, all seem to have agreed to consider hymns *feræ natura*, a kind of common property. The High Churchman sings Toplady's "Rock of Ages" with as much unction as Mr. Gladstone has used in his translation of it into Latin, where it reads as if worthy to rank with the best in the Parisian Breviary; and the Evangelical and the Orthodox equally accept John Wesley's hymns on the Eucharist as for sound doctrine. By an ingenious use of this unworded treaty, the Ritualist—"Ceremonialist" is the latest name given him—contrives to get into church formulas which look uncommonly like services, "Litanies" they are called—"Litany of the Holy Name" and "of the Child Jesus," for children's services, and such like, which are sung with considerable enthusiasm.

But the sight of this book has led us somewhat astray. After the hymn or two, the clergyman supposed to have the charge of the mission delivered from the pulpit a kind of address, extempore, or what should be extempore, consisting of direct appeals to the various classes of evil-doers to quit their ill ways and manners for the several reasons that may always be adduced, pointing them out, with varying ability and various degrees of distinctness, as offences not only against the Christian life, but against society and man's own self interest. After this address came, usually, the "second service," which was the latter part of the service for Ash Wednesday, beginning with the 51st Psalm. One of the clergy said the first half of each verse as far as the point, and the congregation, all kneeling, said aloud the other half. Then, after another hymn, another address was given from the Bible-stand or Lectern, or some place on the floor of the church, by one of the missioners, or by the Bishop, who took the greatest interest in all the proceedings, and himself visited all the churches, taking one each evening, in turn. We happened to meet with him on two occasions in the course of our peregrinations during this Passion Week. The closing part of one of his addresses, given early in the week, was the most powerful thing of the kind we ever heard, and sleeve cuffs and corners of shawls were much in use for rubbing off those bits of dust that somehow will settle upon people's eyelashes sometimes. The second address is given at some length in last Saturday's *City News*, and such of our readers as have not already seen it can refer to it and judge for themselves. Another hymn or two, and the Benediction concluded the service.

It was somewhat curious to notice the attitude of the Manchester press on the subject of this novel and noteworthy mission. The *Guardian*, finding that it had nothing to do with any small Unitarian school, declined even to mention it. The *Examiner*, as a public journal which should have carried the balance of justice, held the sliding-scale of nonconformity, which had no degree in it marked for a Church of England mission. The *Courier*, the so-called Church paper, so far as noticed it at all, which was very slightly, damned it, in the interests of the truth as it is in Bardsley, with faint praise. And the *City News*, alone among our local journals, not being intensely occupied with the state of matters at Bucharest, gave fair and due publicity to the mission, and reported the Bishop's address given on the evening before publication.

Whether this mission will have done any good no one, of course, can tell. A great part of the audience or congregation

at most of the churches were of that respectable lower middle class who fill, or at all events more or less occupy, our churches and chapels. But they weren't all. A large number were of the waif and stray order, the lost or somewhat discoloured sheep of the house of England. If any man can aid them to help themselves we wish him God-speed; he is more likely to succeed if he tries than if he doesn't.

FAILURE OF THE POLICE IN SALFORD.

THE cry "where are the police?" is periodically heard in all towns, but it is rare that such a cry becomes chronic, as it has of late in Salford. Outrage after outrage, and even murder after murder have been committed in the public streets, and in almost broad daylight, and only when too late have the police put in an appearance. A single policeman cannot be ubiquitous, but with our modern intercommunicating streets, under good management, an intelligent officer can practically keep his eye on a considerable area. Of course there are limits to such areas, but their limits are proportionate to their compactness, and an extended narrow oblong is obviously more difficult to watch than a square of exactly the same superficial contents would be.

For months past we have at intervals been engaged in calling attention to the insecurity of life and property in Salford; to the total inadequacy of the police; and to the culpable negligence of the Council or the Watch Committee. From careful inquiry we are led to believe that there are neither men enough employed nor are the beats economically arranged. Compared with Manchester, the proportion of police to population is a very small one, and, as a consequence, the men have impossible miles to traverse. If a man's beat is a two hours' one (and some in Salford are even larger), it follows that a great proportion of the places on his beat must be unprotected during such two hours; or, in other words, that for two hours you may be murdered or garrotted or have your house broken into without your cry of "Police!" being heard by the person whose aid you seek.

There is a great deal to be said in favour of Colonel Henderson's plan, now enforced in London, of having certain fixed points at which a policeman can always be found, and there is a great deal to be said against the present system of meeting at fixed hours at certain points. In a sparsely-officered district whenever two policemen are together the ground far right and left is unprotected, and the immediate neighbourhood is over-protected. A proper supervision by superintendents is necessary, and in semi-country quarters of the town a few mounted police would be both more efficient and more economical than men on foot. The question of mounted police has somehow never entered the heads of our local authorities. It is worthy of trial, and most certain is it that our chief constables should be provided with horses. The more the subordinates are overlooked by their superiors the more efficient they will become, and the more the heads themselves become acquainted with the ins and outs of their towns the better able will they be to appreciate the weaknesses of their positions. A chief-constable should possess the concentrated knowledge of all his force, and be able to give effect to such knowledge with promptness and precision.

In Salford the parsimony of the Watch Committee interferes with the efficiency of the force. The salaries paid are too small, the encouragement held out of promotion is too scanty, and if half is true that we hear, individual interference and arrogance of authority on the part of individual members of the Watch Committee have too long been tolerated. An efficient Chief ought to be encouraged in what may be called constitutional despotism. He should be trusted implicitly, and treated as an adviser rather than as a servant. The cry for more men has been loud and long in Salford, and yet it has met with no response The very offices themselves have become a bye-word for their want of accommodation, and their clerks and superintendents are notoriously overworked, especially on Sundays.

Another great weakness of watch committees has hitherto been the constituting themselves into judicial committees, and pre-investigating cases which only the Bench can legally and constitutionally deal with. Salford has here, in some measure, reformed herself by refusing any more to try publican's cases. The interests of the publican ought to be as jealously guarded by the police as those of any other class of the community, and from their extreme openness to the levying of blackmail, mere police evidence, and that given before non-legal minds, should be very cautiously received. Police duties, both as between the police and the public on the one hand, and authorities and the police on the other, always have and always will require the greatest tact, care, and firmness in their conception and carrying into effect. The Salford Council, through their Watch Committee, have not hitherto earned the spontaneous thanks of their constituents. Let them for the future so reform their present unsatisfactory *regime* as to discharge the difficult but all-important trust with satisfaction to others who are enlightened enough to know that to be penny-wise will invariably, in the end, turn out to be pound-foolish.

[HOLIDAY NOTES AND RAMBLES.]

INGLEBOROUGH.

TWO or three ways of getting to the top of Ingleborough may be taken from Clapham; or rather two or three ways of beginning the ascent. The best is the one we are going to describe. Leaving the church on the right, we are no sooner outside the village than the climb begins, and as a sudden preliminary—for the traveller has very shortly to go down again to the same level from which he started—it is a tolerably hard one. The ladies may avoid this introduction if they can get permission—which we do not think would be refused—to go through Mr. Farrer's grounds. Opening a gate, we enter a steep lane lined with nut and sloe trees. Toilsome though the ascent be, it is worth taking if it be only for the pretty view obtained of the village nestling amid the trees below. At the top of the lane a walk through pleasant meadows brings us to Clapdale farm. Passing through the yard, where a furious barking of dogs greets us, a quick descent through a wood, and over moss-covered stones, and we are in Clapdale. Here our path is joined by the road through the grounds. Of the beauty of Clapdale it is impossible to speak too highly. A narrow dale, with smooth and quite level bottom,

> Whereof the grene gras
> So smale, so thicke, so short, so fresh of hewe
> That most like unto grene wool wot I, it was,

as wrote Chaucer. On the right a clear running stream, eddying round brown-tufted boulders, and bubbling into still pools, in which the timid trout are seen darting to some friendly shelter. Beyond this a narrow strip of stunted and twisted trees, with roots buried in vegetation, and, past these, hills rising into perpendicular limestone precipices. On the left a craggy, wooded slope, ascending one cannot see where for the matted branches. Such is Clapdale. Of its botanical richness we may give an idea by saying that we have counted, without searching, in a few dozen yards, eight or nine varieties of ferns.

Continuing along this charming glen we reach the entrance to Ingleborough Cave. Space will not now permit us to do justice to this wonderful result of the operations of natural law. For countless ages have its beauties slowly accumulated in solitary darkness. The principles of art and music have flourished in its desolate halls. At length, in this last century, man has been admitted, bringing light with him to strike into brilliance its snowy lustres, to ring cadences from its pendant stalactites, and to stand amazed before the perfect grace and elaborate construction of its gothic arches. The thanks of all lovers of Nature are due to the owners of the estate for the undisturbed condition in which one of the finest and longest caves in the country has been preserved.

Passing the entrance to the cave and continuing our walk along the green vista we reach Trow-Gill, a fitting termination to so charming a spot and a grand introduction to the wildness beyond. At this point perpendicular cliffs on either hand gradually approach, until the view is completely closed in. Between these barriers of grey stone, silence and solemnity seem eternal. At the farthest end we find a staircase of fallen rocks leading up to a narrow passage about wide enough to admit a man. Climbing this and passing between the grim portals we gain the summit of the cliffs and are now fairly on the mountain side. Here let us remark that not only a fine day but a dry season should be chosen for the ascent, otherwise the marshy condition of the fells will render progress unpleasant if not impossible. But in dry weather the moss and

short-cropped herbage—Ingleborough Fells are fine lands for sheep-grazing—spring elastically beneath our feet and we get blithely over the ground. On every hand we shall find, if we choose to look for them, caves and holes and "pots." We have partially explored some of the former, and entering a crevice have found ourselves in long galleries and ramifying passages leading to the brink of fearful pits and to some other exit from which we have crept like a rabbit from his burrow. In such adventures candles to see with and sticks to probe with are of course necessary, and, with company, considerable amusement at least will be the result of the explorations. On the side of the mountain are several "bottomless" holes (so-called). The most noted is called Gapin-Gill, and is the one into which falls the stream mentioned in our paper on Clapham. Ascending the mountain the brink can be approached without danger, except in the dark, as a level rocky platform prevents the traveller from coming upon it too suddenly. On the descending side, however, the grass-covered incline shelves right over the edge, and the tourist who has a habit—as some have—of taking the steepest slope down a hill-side would not observe it, unless a slight guarding-rail warned him, until to late. Its whereabouts can be ascertined, however, from the course of the stream which is seen winding along the hill-side. By-the-bye we have observed trout in this stream, some distance above the hole. The mouth of the chasm is about five yards square. We have inspected another on the same hill-side which seemed even wider. If a piece of rock be hurled down it is heard bounding, with long distances between each thunder-like sound, for an incredible space of time, and finishes with a shelving-like rattle. On the only approachable side the visitor may descend several ledges of rock to the brink, but while standing here—being invisible a short distance from the upper edge—it is desirable that his whereabout should be known to anyone who may chance to be above. On one occasion while peering down into the darkness, being inwardly conscious that the touch of the feather would almost suffice to disturb our equilibrium, a huge stone, launched by a later arrival, whistled over our head, and sank sounding into the abyss.

The first part of the ascent consists in climbing what is called Little Ingleborough. A stiff climb it is, but we are encouraged by fondly imagining that we are near the summit. The elevation gained, however, we find that the real head of the mountain, previously obscured by the hill we have scaled, still rises black and lonely before us. Crossing a slightly indented plain, which seems to go circling round barren hills until lost in the distance, we come to the steep sides of the Big Ingleborough. A winding track leads easily to the top, but if the tourist grows impatient and seeks a more speedy path, he must needs bring into use both hands and knees. The sides are covered by flinty chipped stones, called by the dwellers in the dales "screes," which set one wondering where they have come from. Thoroughly breathed, we gain a broad flat surface of considerable extent, and make our way to a dilapidated stone tower without roof, there to dine. Dining is the first thought when the top is reached, and it is very necessary to carry up a plentiful supply of provisions. After refreshment, we proceed to walk round the surface. On several sides the view is not so extended as might be supposed, owing to the neighbouring hills which occupy the horizon. But on all sides a glorious panorama is unrolled. Straight before us is the expanse over which we have passed, bounded by sky and the distant hills. More to the right the long valley of cultivated fields, studded with villages and intersected by white winding roads and streams stretching away to the cloud of smoke which betokens Lancaster and to the broad gleaming surface of Morecambe Bay. Beyond this is seen the open sea with a steamer lazily moving over it. Continuing our walk round the summit we gaze down the precipitous side into a deep and quiet valley, guarded beyond by the peculiar overhanging slopes of Whernside. A cluster of white cottages at the bottom surround the little church, which for generations has been known as Chapel-le-dale. Shuddering at the thought of a fall from this side we come round to the Pen-y-gant end of the lofty platform on which we stand and, looking towards that craggy summit, the eye rests upon a broad expanse of bleak hill-tops like the surface of a whilom tempestuous sea whose nightly billows had been petrified as they rose.

Ingleborough is not a pleasant place to be on in a mist, as our experience can testify. We had ascended from the Chapel-le-Dale side intending to cross to Clapham. The wind was blowing strongly as we climbed, but, when we gained the top, we found it necessary to run behind the old stone hut lest we should loose our foot-hold. We had no sooner placed the wall between us and the blast than the valleys seemed to be filled with white vapour, and in an instant we were unable to see more than a foot of ground before us. There was no roof to the hut; the afternoon was drawing to a close; it was bitter cold, and the mist was beginning to wet us. To attempt to descend was out of the question, owing to the precipitous nature of the mountain on several sides; and, apart even from the danger of a headlong fall from the top, the thought of the various chasms was not pleasant. An exceptionally strong gust of wind at length cleft a gap in the white clouds, and, advancing cautiously to what we imagined to be the Chapham side, we discovered the path. We had the satisfaction of soon getting clear from the mist, and marched quickly towards Little Ingleborough. Looking back we saw the crowning hill completely enveloped in black clouds, battalions of which were chasing us down the mountain side. The rain now falling the grass and moss became wet and heavy. Our apparel was soon completely soaked. We hurried on, and reached Clapham before dusk, having crossed Ingleborough—including our stay on the top—in about four hours.

LECTURES TO LADIES.

I.—DRESS.

"BEAUTY when unadorned 's adorned the most" may be theoretically true, but as our climate is not that of the Garden of Eden the primeval beauty of our women has to be largely concealed beneath stouter and more intricate screens than mere aprons of fig leaves. Still there is much to be said against the over-adornment so prevalent in this our day, and in nothing do women, as a rule, so coarsely shew their lack of art education as in the foolish and deforming absurdities they perpetrate in the way of dress. From the crowns of their heads to the soles of their feet they are "unnatural and full of contradictions," and it is rarely that a glimpse of the true woman can be caught, so completely has every natural grace and feature been distorted and masked. Neither utility nor grace are considered for one moment in the planning or devising women's attire. Comfort, health, and naturalness are all sacrificed before the female Moloch, Fashion, and the distorted mother, unmindful of her own experiences, early begins to train up her daughters in the way they should not go.

The first thing to be considered in matters of dress is Utility, and then, without sacrificing one jot or one tittle of utility, to happily combine Grace with it. Originally ladies' clothes were in fewer pieces than they are at present,—a robe, a girdle, and sandals forming the complete attire. Climate gradually necessitated additions, and so piece by piece, and step by step, we have arrived at the thousand and one garments, without which no woman thinks herself decently clothed. It is self-evident that with the multiplication of articles of clothing, the original figure becomes proportionately altered, until at last it is entirely changed. Now, utility demands that necessity of climate alone shall regulate the quantity of dress; then grace will step in and arrange the cut and colour.

Since our women will not adopt Turkish or Bloomer fashions, the most useful and the most graceful of dresses are those that cling with slightly flowing motion—not tight and constricting, but essentially easy, without being slovenly. Perhaps what ladies call morning costume, without stays, comes nearest to the perfection of modern dress, but a dress which requires crinoline, or those peculiar-looking excrescences which meet our view in the milliners' windows in King Street and St. Ann's Passage, are barbarous in the extreme. Why, in the name of common sense, do women require that three or more rows of puffed-out horse-hair should be tied on their bodies in order to make a saddle-like protuberance on which a child might ride? Why, too, need they burden their already over-weighted hips with distended steel-ribbed petticoats? Warmth is essential to health, but, crinolines destroy one-half the effect of the external dress. With our muddy streets and roads, it is essential that, to allow free movement of the feet, the underclothing should be moderately short, but an easily looped-up dress equalizes this. Draggled in the dirt skirts are to be avoided both as detrimental to health and comfort; but even they are lesser evils than iron hoops.

The material of which dresses is composed, and their colour, are also

matters of no little importance. Whatever the wealth or poverty of the wearer, the material should be honest cotton—should not pretend to be wool or silk. There is a very mine of poetry in truth, and would women only apply this to their attire, they would add a charm and a picturesqueness only to be met with in the best period of the mediæval ages. The prevailing love of shams has much to do with the degeneracy of taste in dress. In bonnets and hats, perhaps, we have been nearer of late—with small bonnets and turbans—to what we could desire than at any former period; but no sooner has a comely fashion been by chance hit upon, than its very beauty or simplicity hastens its destruction. A woman's hair ought to be her main capital adornment; and here, just a word may be said on behalf of false hair. If, through ill-health or other causes, a woman has the misfortune to lose her own luxuriant hair, surely it is by no means wrong to supplement or make good such loss by the use of false, or rather attached hair? It is very different when an already naturally bountiful supply is not considered sufficient without resort to extraneous aid. In the hair, however, women will not be natural. There are only three real ways of wearing the hair. The natural—*i.e.*, hanging down the back; the Grecian—plaited in easy coils, and wound round the back of the head; or a compromise between these two methods, viz., loosely twisted, and then pinned up in unplaited coils. In nothing are women so suicidal as in their treatment of their hair. They twist it and crimp it and torture it until it is either pulled out or it dies. The horribly dirty system of pads and frizettes has much to answer for.

As to colour, we are glad to see a slight return to the use of the primitive colours. Under our dull leaden skies warmth of colour is much needed. If to simplicity of dress and truth in material, good taste in colour were added, the effect would be pleasing indeed.

When women wilfully twist their bodies to imitate a dear, but slightly lame princess, and destroy the wonderful mechanism of the foot, and crush their ribs in stays, there is little hope of much reform. The feet ought to be cased in the easiest and flattest of boots and shoes, and the chest should be left as unrestricted as a child's At an unknown amount of suffering to themselves, women distort themselves bodily and mentally to please fashion. We laugh at our woad-painted ancestors, and sneer at the blue tattoo markings of the South-sea Island maidens, and yet a much higher art is displayed in such adornments than in narrow waists, bent backs, high shoulders, powdered cheeks, and cushioned hair. Doctors tell us of the fearful prevalence of that class of diseases politely comprised under the term "general debility," and they also know how they are certainly due to artificiality of dress and life. At present woman's world is an artificial one. It is a very costly one too, and by insisting on its continuance they are fast losing their influence on mankind.

LANCASHIRE WORTHIES.

ERRATUM.

In the sketch of Dr. Thomas Percival, in our last publication, the following sentence occurred with reference to the early composition of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society:—"Among the first members were Dr. Darwin, &c., and two ever-memorable foreigners, Monsieur Lavoisier, 'the Newton of modern chemistry' (as he is styled in the original list), and 'Mr. Alexander Volta, professor of experimental philosophy at Como,' the inventor of the Voltaic pile." Here, by the transposition of a clause, the absurdity is committed of representing it to be possible that in 1781, and above all in a mere business list of names, Lavoisier was dubbed "the Newton of modern chemistry." The sentence should have been printed thus: "Among the first members were Dr. Darwin, &c., and two ever-memorable foreigners, 'Monsieur Lavoisier,' the Newton of modern chemistry, and 'Mr. Alexander Volta, professor of experimental philosophy at Como' (as he is styled in the original list), the inventor of the Voltaic pile."

PENCILLINGS BY THE WAY.—The tickets filled up by 'bus guards.

DANGEROUS LEAPS.—Gin Vaults.

BORN TO GOOD LUCK.—J. W. Maclure, Esq., J.P., D.L., has been gazetted to the junior majority of the Third Manchester Rifle Volunteers. His duty when skirmishing will be to take charge of the Relief.

TOWN TALK,

AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

WOMEN AND THE CENSUS.

IT is a dreadful reflection to think how much dissimulation and deceit the taking of the census this week will have given rise to. It has been a terrible time for ladies of uncertain age. They have not merely had to fill in their own ages and deliver them in secret to the collectors, but they have had to state them to some responsible father of a family, who has had to vouch for them. Imagine the agony of all such who happened to be on a visit at the time. What a rush home there will have been from all parts of the country on last Saturday and Sunday? The railways must have made a very good thing out of their last week's traffic. But subtracting all these cases, a vast number of unhappy spinsters will have been brought to bay in a most unpleasant manner. We deeply sympathize with them. It must be a heart-rending thing to see oneself written down aged, when one feels and one fain thinks appears quite juvenile and is perfectly ready to marry the first man who offers. We suspect there will have been a great run on the age of thirty. Thirty is a respectable mature age, not too old, nor too young neither. We imagine there will be far more women set down at thirty in this year 1871 than the year of grace 1841 gave birth to, notwithstanding all who may have died. There must be great advantages attendant on this numbering of the people to compensate for the misery it has inflicted.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE BIRDS.

The ungenial weather of the last ten days has checked the arrival of our spring visitors. Up to this time (April 5th) we have heard of none except that "gay deceiver" the sedge-warbler, the chiffchaff, and the swallow. True, the monotonous, but welcome note of the cuckoo has been reported as heard in one instance, but it was so long before the usual advent of the bird that we must give credit to some peasant boy for originating the deception. The plaintive peet, peet, peet, of the snake bird (so called for its hissing when interfered with), or wryneck (so called from its habit of twisting its neck when alarmed), has not yet, to our knowledge, been heard, and it is the *avant courier* of the cuckoo. Before these notes are published, however, many of our beautiful little songsters, including "sweet Philomel," will be due, and doubtless the arrivals will be numerous.

INCONVENIENCES ON 'CHANGE.

It has been long and repeatedly asked why a rich corporation like the Manchester Royal Exchange does not do more for the comfort and convenience of its highly-taxed subscribers. We will say nothing about the overcrowding, for that it purposes to remedy by the erection of a larger building, nor about the inadequate supply of newspapers and periodicals, but it is sadly remiss in smaller yet still most important matters. Take for example, the absolute want of arrangements or convenience for the safe keeping of any subscriber's property. Parcels, whether of samples or otherwise, have to be dropped in out-of-the-way corners or lodged on some shelf or desk accessible to everybody. Umbrellas can only be left in ricketty stands, at the mercy of anybody choosing to carry them off. Such petty pilferers as umbrella stealers should not be found, we know, among a commercial community, but the fact still remains that umbrellas are missed, whether by accident or design we know not. During the past month many have been missed, chiefly good ones, and nothing has since been heard of them. For a country subscriber, especially, it is a nuisance to be compelled to carry an umbrella about all day, but this must be done unless the owner doesn't wish to see it again. It appears that all umbrellas left in the stands at seven p.m. are collected, and lie in the office awaiting claimants. No fault can be found with the directors for the loss of property carelessly left, but they could at the least post a small placard each month, stating the nature of the articles found. Owners would then have a chance of knowing whether their property had been stolen or otherwise. As it is, they rarely enquire at the counter if they miss anything from the place where they deposited it. Now in a small exchange like Blackburn, regular registered stands are kept, where subscribers can deposit their umbrellas and carry the key about with

them, by which means their property is secure; and the subscription is only 25s. a year. We should like to know what becomes of the left property. We hear of no sales, and we know there is an accumulation. The directors, if they desire the goodwill of the members, should look to these little matters, and if they are not remedied in the Old, let us hope that they will be remedied in the New Exchange.

JOURNALISTIC HONESTY.

The *Orchestra*, a London musical and dramatic journal, in a recent issue, gave a tolerably large slice from our critique upon *Timon of Athens*, and blended it with an extract from another paper, without a word of acknowledgment of its indebtedness to either. We suppose we ought to appreciate this as a tribute to the merit of our notice; but when an appropriation of the sort is made, it is customary, as well as just, that some recognition of its source should be added.

OBNOXIOUS BELLS.

Mr. Baron Bramwell is presiding at the Chester assizes. Mr. Baron Bramwell was disturbed by the sonorous accents of a neighbouring bell. Mr. Baron Bramwell sent to tell the bell that if it didn't stop at once he would commit it. The bell stopped. Oh, that we had a Baron Bramwell in Manchester to stop that clanging nuisance at the Old Church of a Sunday evening, which is still at its old game, persisting in beginning its commotion just when neighbouring congregations are in the middle of their prayers.

HENRY LIVERSEEGE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SPHINX.

SIR,—I have read with great pleasure your admirable article on Liverseege, which appeared in a recent number of the *Sphinx*. You have very properly classed him amongst the Lancashire Worthies. Pardon me if I demur to the statement that he at any time was treated with cruelty by his father. The charge is a serious one, and casts an unjust stigma on the memory of one now far removed from the possibility of refuting it. No one knew Liverseege better than I did. We were daily in mutual intercourse during the whole of his professional career. He seemed to hide nothing from me. I have frequently spoken to him of his father, and I cannot call to mind any single instance of his making a remark that would lead me to infer that his father had been unkind to him. The old man was in the habit of sitting to him as a model, and is conspicuous in the picture called *The Recruit*, as the sergeant. Liverseege in personal appearance was diminutive, and below the middle size, being five feet five inches in height.

AMICUS VERITATIS.

Dudley Cottage, Camp Street, Lower Broughton.

PASSION WEEK AND HOLY WEEK.

Some erroneous notions seem to prevail as to which week in the year is, properly speaking, Passion-week. Now the present week, of which Good Friday is one of the days, was anciently and has been continuously called Holy Week, and it is now called so by the great majority of people who regard Good Friday as a day for religious observances. Last Sunday but one, the fifth Sunday in Lent, has, in the same way, been called, and is now called Passion Sunday, partly because the services of the Church have begun to direct immediate attention to the Passion—"the sufferings and death of Christ—and also because He himself, as on that day, first began to speak plainly and unreservedly of what was shortly to happen to him eighteen hundred and thirty-eight years since. From "Passion Sunday," the week which it begins has been generally called Passion Week, but up in these parts, where we have never been very particular about what a thing was called so long as we had what we wanted, Holy Week, the week of the Passion itself, has come to be called Passion Week, and to very many worthy people and good Christians it is scarcely known by any other name. The error would appear to be spreading, for *The Times* of Monday last also speaks of this week as Passion Week. Thursday, the day before Good Friday, is "Maundy Thursday," a Disraelian as well as a Christian date, and is not to be confounded with "Holy Thursday" or Ascension-day, which is always the Thursday but one before Whitsun-day. We may here also observe that the third day (inclusive) from Good Friday is not Sunday. It is Easter day, the anniversary of the Resurrection, the guide and warrant for every Sunday since. As many people who use the Common Prayer-book will probably be turning to the calendar at the beginning, and will there find some pages about the Golden Number and the Sunday Letter, which they have probably not understood, we propose to give in our next week's issue some explanation of these mysterious pages.

RELIGIOUS SLANG.

We are surprised and shocked to find so serious a body of religionists as the Methodists joking on so solemn a subject as death; yet it is not to be doubted that the following advertisement appeared in the *Guardian* of Saturday last:

THE Death of the late lamented Miles Craston, Esq., will be Improved in LEVER STREET CHAPEL, TO-MORROW EVENING, by AARON WESTON, Esq. Service will commence at Six o'clock.

We don't know much of the late lamented Miles Craston, Esq., but we believe he served the public for some years as one of their representatives in the City Council, and was altogether a decent and good citizen. There is certainly no reason for supposing that he would die in any offensive or improper manner, and we should have thought that the mode of his departure from this world might very well have been left in the hands of himself and his Maker. But there are always men who think they can improve upon Providence. Comte thought the solar system was constructed in a very bungling manner, and Mr. Aaron Weston would seem to be anything but satisfied with the manner of Mr. Craston's death. He not only thinks he can improve it, but flatly announces that at a certain hour and place he will. Poor Mr. Craston is not even then to be allowed to rest in peace. Mr. Weston is determined to have two goes at him: as is shown by this supplementary announcement:

LEVER STREET CHAPEL.—Rev. WILLIAM HUBBARD will Preach TO-MORROW MORNING at 10.30. In the Evening, at six o'clock, Mr. AARON WESTON will improve the death of the late Mr. Miles Craston.

Really, Mr. Craston must have died in a very obnoxious manner if his death requires so much improving as all this. Hadn't Mr. Weston better publish a small handbook on the art of dying properly; or hadn't he better still leave deaths alone and take to lives, and see if he can improve some of them.

AN EVENING WITH THE JESUITS.

MOST people have by this time seen the extremely handsome stone building in Oxford Road, the exterior of which is now rapidly approaching completion. Not so many may have noticed a low, square brick affair situate between the back of the marvel of stone-work and Dover Street, which looks for all the world like a Liverpool cotton shed or a Snig-bruck weaving "shade" without its northern sky-lights. The first is for a Roman Catholic Church—a Jesuit Church, and the low structure is the temporary church where, in the meantime, until the larger building is completed, service is held and a congregation for the future church is gradually being gathered together.

Now, we are not Jesuits; nor, indeed, of the Roman Catholic persuasion or creed, or whatever it is called, in any way, and it is on this basis that whatever we have now to say is to be understood. We have, of course, in common with most respectable English people who pay their way and go to church a-Sundays been brought up in certain opinions, or rather some *un*certain opinions, about Jesuits, looking upon them more in the light of a sort of religious "long firm" than a set of people that had any proper claim to be considered Christians. Yet we have met with men who have been for years in the habit of going to the churches under their care, about whose honesty and rectitude we couldn't doubt for a moment, and whose word we would take against that of more than one who goes on 'Change on week-days and preaches at Little Bethel on Sund—we beg pardon—the Sabbath. Truly or falsely the Jesuits have long had a name for ability, power, unscrupulousness, and indestructibility. Crush them in one place, they shoot up again in another, and like some of the lower forms of animal life, if cut to pieces and dispersed, each part forthwith sets up on its own account in life, after the original type, seemingly very little the worse. That is the general historical account of them. But notwithstanding all the cleverness that they are generally credited with,

they don't seem to have done themselves much good, as far as we can see. However, we know nothing either for or against them, of our own knowledge, and are neither going to call them names nor to give them a clean bill of health, but have merely in mind to say a few words about their (temporary) church and one of their preachers.

We took a seat in a pew a short distance up the middle of the church. The place soon began to fill, and more coming after the service began, were crammed in, here and there, long after every pew seemed full. The service was begun without any particular beginning. One of the priests came to the front of the altar, attended by two surpliced choristers, who stood on one side inside the railings. He repeated several prayers in English in a loud and not pleasing voice, followed by a sort of litany, and then more prayers, including the Lord's Prayer and the "Hail Mary," about a dozen times over, to which he was responded and amen'd by the two satellites. The preacher was fetched out of the vestry adjoining. He came and took his stand on the topmost step or wide space in front of the altar.

The preacher was the Rev. Father Harper, S.J., who, besides being one of the best preachers of their body, is a Professor of Pastoral Theology, if we remember rightly, at the Jesuit College near Denbigh, North Wales. We can only explain Pastoral Theology after the celebrated method of explaining Chinese metaphysics. We can understand "pastoral," and can guess at what is meant by "theology"; so, taken together, we should imagine Mr. Harper to be a sort of rural dean, or one that professes to be such, and is a kind of young man from the country over whom to get is a proverbial difficulty. Father Harper, furthermore, is a 'vert. He was a Cambridge man, whether in Anglican orders we do not remember, who, for reasons no doubt satisfactory to himself, "went over" from the English Church to the Roman, somewhere about the time of Dr. Manning's per- or con-version. He is without doubt one of the most intelligent English members of the priesthood of that church, and is, moreover, a gentleman. He is said to be, in private, overflowing with good humour, and possessed of an almost inexhaustible fund of anecdote—one, in short, who refuses to see the sour or gloomy side of religion.

As he stood by the altar his appearance was winning, but serious. The subject announced was "the victory of suffering," a somewhat mystical title, and the preacher, quoting his text in Latin and then in English from the Epistle for the day, which is the same in the Church Prayer Book, from the second of Philippians. "He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him." It would be impossible, with the space before us, to give anything like an adequate *resumé* of a discourse lasting upwards of an hour, and full of happy turns of expression, and marked by periods of vigorous declamation. The chief points seemed to be, that the circumstances attending the birth and subsequent life on earth of our Lord were as opposite as could possibly have been conceived by men who expected such a deliverer and king as it had been prophesied should appear. That when he was expected to be of royal descent, and to be, as it were, born in the purple, he was born in the outhouse of an inn, apparently of poor parents, though they were really of the lineage of David. That when he might have been expected to have passed his life in proclaiming and consolidating his power, he worked as a village artificer, and his public ministry resulted in what seemed only to be an aggravation of his original poverty, followed shortly by disgrace and ruin, ending in a violent death. But how different it was as we saw it now. He took upon himself the sins of the world, humbled himself to death, and is now our brother and friend at the right hand of the Father. When he was seemingly at the worst, expiring on the cross, he was accomplishing the tremendous sacrifice. So the church, when most depressed, put out her greatest powers for the aid of mankind, and so each individual member of it, when most distressed, must remember that it was only by such suffering that he could in the closest manner resemble Christ, his Divine Master, who was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, and the disciple could not expect to be above his Lord.

There was one allusion which we did not consider he was justified in making. It was that the Sovereign Pontiff had been betrayed by wicked men, and, as a prisoner in the Vatican, was, as it were, nailed to the cross with Christ, and would, like Him, grow stronger and more powerful than ever. This phase of politics is often introduced into the Roman Catholic pulpit, *jussu superiorum* probably, but we never met with an intelligent Roman Catholic layman who took that view of it; and certainly no Roman Catholic country, even Italy, or the very Romans themselves, think so. It is the papistical or popery side of the question which will always be a bar to the spread of the Roman Catholic religion among the English people. The properly religious side of the question, especially as given in a truly evangelical sermon such as this (with the exception noted), might stand, as it no doubt always will, without aid of man's device, in the hearts and lives of all Christians of whatever colour or creed.

The rest of the service was, for the most part, sung by a professional men-and-women choir, accompanied by a harmonium, very well played, and everybody seemed glad when it was over, and hasted to get out of the building to the fresh air once more.

MONOMANIACS.

INSTANCES of monomania of an aggravated type, in which the victims suffer from the most extravagant delusions, are by no means uncommon. The monomaniac sometimes fancies that his head is turned the wrong way. At one time he is a pump, and desires to have his arm worked up and down like the handle of that primitive engine. Sometimes the disease takes the form of religious melancholy, and at others of fanatical elevation of spirits. People have been known to fancy that they were glass vessels, liable to be broken with the slightest touch. Others have imagined themselves to be ducks, and have insisted upon squatting upon a particular spot for hours at a time, hatching imaginary eggs. Without dwelling further upon such extreme cases, most of which are more or less traceable to previous causes, we propose briefly to consider some of the minor cases of monomania which meet us in society almost every day of our existence.

The concentration of the mind and energies upon one particular subject to the exclusion of all others—in other words, the riding of one particular hobby to death—does produce a species of monomania, which warps the judgment of the person who is under such control for the time being, and frequently ends by incapacitating him from pursuing his daily avocations. Commercial men deeply engrossed in business are liable to seizures of this nature, and are frequently attacked by them. The strain upon the mind which never ceases from the one idea of money-making is very great, and a sudden collapse of the system frequently happens to the strongest men. Instances are numerous where successful men who have been engaged in trade all their lives, and have concentrated all their energies upon the accumulation of wealth, have been seized in their old age with the delusion that they were completely destitute, and have had a small sum doled out to them each morning by their friends in order to convince them that they were not exposed to absolute want. Even large bags of gold have been supplied to millionaires, so that they might pass their time manipulating the sovereigns. Inordinate love of money becomes a curse to its possesser, and in this sense, as described by the apostle, is the root of every evil.

Spendthrifts and misers are equally monomaniacs, and are witnesses to "the falsehood of extremes," of which the poet speaks. Timon of Athens was a monomaniac, both when he was squandering his fortunes upon flatterers, pimps, and parasites, and afterwards, when he retired disgusted to the woods to live upon roots, exclaiming,

I am misanthropos and hate mankind.

Of spendthrift maniacs and miser maniacs, we are almost inclined to consider the former the worst of the two, and of late, there have been some glaring specimens in high circles of society—men who really were unfit to be entrusted with the command and control of money. The miser-maniac is possibly the more miserable wretch of the two, although he is not such an enemy to social well-being, as he does not destroy wealth and the means of production. The miser is his own moral enemy and destroyer, but he does not carry rack and ruin along with him, in his ignoble career, as the selfish spendthrift does.

Acquisitiveness is a prevalent source of mania. In excess, it leads to kleptomania, although that singular disease appears sometimes to have its origin in mere caprice and whim, or even in absence of mind. We once knew a singular instance of a man in good circumstances, of independent means, and not of an ungenerous disposition, whose organ of

acquisitiveness was so strong that he spent a large portion of his time picking up anything that he could find, and which had apparently no owner. When he died, his cellars were found crammed full of all manner of rubbish which he had collected—old rusty nails and pieces of broken metal; old clay pipes, oyster shells, and other street sweepings. Probably he was possessed with the idea that nothing should be wasted, but he might wisely have left his hobby to the street professional scavengers, and devoted his leisure to some more rational pursuit.

Personal and inordinate vanity and self-love are conducive to the malady of which we are speaking. The victim is so eternally thinking about himself, and is so absorbed in his own consciousness, that he imagines that everybody else is thinking about him, which is quite a mistake, as really we think very little about each other. The vain monomaniac, however, labouring under the hallucination that he is the observed of all observers, or at least the cynosure of neighbouring eyes, lives entirely for appearances, and deludes himself with the idea that he is an object of admiration, if not envy, to his neighbours, when nobody cares two straws about him. This monomaniac leads a completely artificial life and experiences very little real solid comfort. He is never contented, and always secretly unhappy, because his self-love is so outrageous that it can never be fully satisfied. Abject flattery affords him a brief and fleeting gratification; but the more he is dosed with it, the more he wants to take of the pernicious drug. In this respect he exactly resembles those conceited feathered bipeds, the peacock and his kinsman, the turkey-cock, who expand their tails and go strutting about the lawn and farm-yard fancying they are the centre of the whole system of existence.

There is, however, another specimen of the vain monomaniac, who is a much happier person. This is the mere boasting, self-glorious, empty-headed individual, with a natural flow of spirits and good digestion. The form in which this monomaniac's complaint shows itself is intense egotism. The first personal pronoun is never out of his mouth. There is nothing which he cannot do; at least, in his opinion, anything which he cannot do is not worth doing. In a low sense and estimation of happiness this monomaniac is a happy individual. He is seldom or never miserable; but, then, the man who is never miserable is not competent to feel the highest form of human happiness. He really has no aspirations, and it may be allowed that those who "have immortal longings" in them are well compensated for periods of pain and depression. The boasting, cheerful monomaniac is, however, in a worldly sense, so far as we can judge, one of the happiest individuals whom we meet with.

> Dearly bought, the hidden treasure
> Finer feelings can bestow—
> Chords which vibrate sweetest pleasure
> Thrill the deepest notes of woe.

Acquisitiveness of a mild form, which does not absorb every other faculty, but confines itself to some particular hobby and assumes the form of connoisseurship, frequently becomes a monomania which acquires undue strength as it is yielded to, and indulged in. Thus it has been said that a man who is gifted with a "taste" has got a very expensive hobby, and a severe taskmaster to gratify. Connoisseurs may arrive at the possession of valuable and rare collections of their various fancies, but they have generally gone through a varied and expensive experience before they have satisfied their ambition and cravings. This class includes bibliopoles, picture-buyers, fanciers of horseflesh, bird-fanciers, collectors of curiosities, old coins, and all manner of knicknacks and articles of vertu. Over and above the immediate possession of such property, there must be some intense gratification in the accumulation of it, for sooner or later it all gets dispersed again. Your genuine bibliopole is a true monomaniac. He cannot resist buying books which he has no earthly use for, and which he frequently never attempts to read. Still he goes on buying and buying, and is almost sure to yield himself up to temptation at the first old stall which he stops at. The picture-buyer has a touch of the same malady. He goes on buying until he absolutely has no space to hang his pictures in, and stows them away in a garret or somewhere where they are not seen from one year's end to the other. It is recorded of the late Samuel Rogers, banker and poet, that he said he never went far wrong with the pictures which he bought, because he never gave above ten pounds for any of them. Many picture-buyers know little or nothing of what they are buying, and, perhaps, the best thing they can do is to follow Mr. Rogers's plan, unless they have plenty of money and can get the advice of some trustworthy judge.

Another familiar monamaniac is the wine fancier. His thoughts, walk, and conversation revolve round choice wines and vintages. Not that he necessarily indulges in these luxuries, only that he knows what is good, and he is determined to have better wines than any of his friends and acquaintances. He may have as much wine in his cellar as will last him and his guests for the full term of his natural life, but he can no more resist buying something "curious" and famous than he can fly.

Commerce also claims its victims in special branches of trade; and in those which are of a speculative nature monomaniacs are abundant. To take one specimen—the Cotton maniac. *Quem Deus perdere vult prius dementat* is a well-worn maxim, which we may freely translate thus:—He who goes crazy about cotton is likely to come to grief. The cotton maniac has almost always got it into his head that cotton is going to advance in price, and is in his element when the market is excited. If cotton is flat and declining, the cotton-maniac is always ready to tell you the exact time when the bottom will be reached. In fact, he rather recommends buying, even although it is going down, because shortly the price will be dearer than ever. The cotton maniac revels in figures and statistics about last year's crop, this year's crop, next year's crop, and even the crop of the year after next. With much earnest gesticulation, shrugging of the shoulders, and wagging of the forefinger, he strongly advises you to buy, and is prepared to "guarantee" you from all loss. Of course you will judge for yourself whether to accept the security. When a crash comes, the cotton-maniac generally disappears for a while, but has wonderful resurrectionary powers.

[FROM A NATURALIST'S NOTEBOOK.]

THE WREN.

ONCE upon a time the birds, weary of anarchy, passionately desired peace and quietness, law and order, and seriously considered the propriety of establishing a government sufficiently strong to correct existing abuses. These were patent to all the wisest and best of the community. Rooks were daily in the habit of committing most disgraceful burglaries. The cuckoo, not satisfied with placing her offspring in any foundling hospital she could meet with in hedgerow or coppice, ruthlessly evicted the babes she found there, thrusting them out on the pitiless world to die of cold and hunger, whilst hawks and kites roamed through the kingdom and murdered "at discretion." It was time these evils should cease, and a committee, *pro tem*, was chosen to consider the best means of carrying out the national will. After due deliberation that august body recommended monarchy, and it was further suggested that the candidate who could fly the highest should be deemed best fitted to reign.

On the day appointed, the aspirants for regal honours mustered in great force. The swallow, conscious of speed, proudly plumed his wings. The lark looked important, and already promised his patronage to a host of humble clients. The pelican of the wilderness and the albatross, accustomed to battle with the tornado, were there. The eagle stood calmly amongst the throng, whilst the wren, meditating a *coup d'etat*, hopped to his side and crept slyly under his feathers. At a given signal the competitors started. In a moment the pelican and albatross found themselves "nowhere;" the swallow was distanced; even the lark grew dizzy with the increasing rarity of the air. Upwards and onwards, however, soared the eagle, and far above the clouds heard the shouts that hailed him king. On his descent, the owl, as archbishop of the state, proceeded to invest his majesty with the insignia of empire, when, to the astonishment of all, the wren sprang from his concealment, and proved incontestably that, seated on his back, however high the eagle flew he must have mounted higher. The plea was admitted, crown and sceptre were laid at his feet, and from that time to the present not even the most radical fowl in the kingdom has been heard to dispute the claim of the wren to the proud title of king of the birds.

Notwithstanding his exalted rank, his majesty has but little apparent dignity about him. His size and port are against him; in fact, he is the smallest person in the kingdom, except a near relation, Mr. Cutty Goldcrest. His robes, too, look somewhat brown and dull, but on

closer inspection it may be seen that they are elegantly embroidered with various shades of rich colouring. The monarch, however, possesses higher claims to the veneration of his people. Wholly free from the curse of ambition, policy and respect for himself combine to prevent his acceptance of the peace-at-any-price doctrine. His taxation is nearly equal to his expenses, so he cannot afford to indulge in brief and extravagant delusions. Respected abroad, he devotes much of his time to walking incognito through hedges and quiet woods, like a modern Haroun Alraschid, noting, probably, the condition and conduct of his subjects. Nor is this all; for he possesses right royal opinions on the duty of providing a goodly array of lineal successors to his throne, and deems them a cheap standing army for the repression of usurpers, pretenders, mob law, and the like. It is said that no man is a hero to his valet, and a king is only half a king to his biographer. Taking advantage of our position at court—which is by no means a sinecure—we will approach the presence chamber, view his majesty more nearly, and discourse of him as we should of any ordinary bird.

If the rufous Chiff-chaff and the golden-crested Wren are excepted, the restless busy creature of which we write is the smallest of British birds, his entire length being only three inches and a half, the tail feathers measuring more than one third of the whole. Like the Robin—with whom he is often associated in song, legend, and nursery rhymes—the wren is a sacred bird, though we shall presently see that in one part of the kingdom he is annually persecuted for some supposed partizanship in wars happily now more than half-forgotten. We do not pause to describe minutely the gay little songster, "that courts the neighbourhood of man, and safe in its insignificance seems to place implicit trust in him." This would be the poetic view of his actions; were they stated in plain prose the account might run something as follows. Too small to retain any great amount of animal heat, frost and snow affect the wren severely, and, in order to avoid perishing from cold and hunger, it haunts manor-houses, comfortable rectories, farms, and cottages, where it picks up an honest livelihood; roosts by night in warm cattle-sheds, for the sake of the heat produced by the animals, and involuntarily repays these benefits by singing his best by way of keeping himself in spirits. There are more Mark Tapleys in feathers than in broad-cloth.

The wren is not only an ambitious, but a skilful builder. Sometimes he lays the foundation of his house on a sunny slope, or within an easy distance of an old road; at other times the trunk of a moss-grown tree or an odorous hay-rick takes his fancy; but whatever spot he may select the shape and size of his nuptial bower are always the same. Large in proportion to the owner, and oval in form, it is so well roofed that cold and damp are in a great degree excluded. Never was lady's boudoir, however costly the hangings, more comfortably furnished than the country seat of Mrs. Wren; nor can we fail to notice in the manifold contrivances therein displayed a desire for the production and maintenance of heat. The egg of the wren is very pretty and delicate; from ten to twelve are often found in a nest. The poor parents must work early and late to support such a family. The majority of the feathered race forsake their nests if watched either whilst building or during the earlier days of incubation. Jesse shows us how one little bird shut the door in the faces of impertinent intruders, and altered the plan of her house to suit the occasion. We will endeavour to tell the story from memory. A country rector called at one of the cottages in his parish, and being on affectionate terms with the junior members, was taken to see a wren's nest in the garden hedge. Desirous, probably, of giving a lesson in humanity, the rector promised them a present in case the little family were not molested. Calling a few days subsequently, he looked again at the nest, and, finding the aperture closed, not unreasonconjectured the children had broken their promise. When the charge was denied, the good priest examined the structure more narrowly, and found that the clever architects had built up one door and opened another in the back part of the premises, whilst the children confessed they had often watched though they refrained from actually touching the nest.

A curious custom of hunting the wren on St. Stephen's Day prevailed generally in the West of Ireland a few years since—a custom, we believe not yet quite extinct. Like many of the solemnities observed in that peaceable country, this odd kind of hunting was instituted in order to keep an old grievance healthy, fresh, and green. The design, however, failed signally, dying at last from sheer age and impotence. The origin was somewhat as follows, though the legend is narrated in various ways:—In the good old days, during one of the many rebellions, a royalist detachment, wearied by a long march, encamped at nightfall, ignorant that a hostile force lay in the neighbourhood. A surprise was planned, and well nigh successfully executed. The outposts slept, the foe was advancing, when a wren, spying some crumbs on the head of a drum, hopped on the martial instrument and commenced pecking. Rat-tat-tat, whispered the parchment. The notes, low as they were, awoke the drummer, who, seeing the danger, seized his sticks and gave the alarm. The insurgents were routed, the wren was tried and found guilty, and in memory of his high misdemeanour was ever after hunted to the death on the anniversary of the martyr whose last prayer was for the pardon of his murderers.

WOMEN ON 'CHANGE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SPHINX.

SIR,—A terrible report is abroad, that some of the extreme female advocates of women's rights intend to subscribe to the Manchester Exchange as soon as the new building is open. I need scarcely say that this rumour has fluttered the Volces in that Corio very considerably. What! the dovecote, hitherto appropriated by us men, to be invaded by the amazons. What on earth is to become of us, and whither are we drifting? Hitherto, women have occasionally made their appearance on 'Change on "gaping Saturdays" and other days, accompanied by a male escort, and apparently from motives of curiosity. If there be any truth in this report, however, they are now about to beard us in our own den. If it be true, I can only say with old Shylock, "Thou stick'st a dagger in me."

I have no prospectus of the Exchange by me, or complete copy of the rules, but from those which hang up in the room, I presume the advocates of women's rights claim their rights of admission upon the following.

"All *persons* attending the Manchester Exchange are required to pay the following rates of subscription:—

"1. *Persons* residing or having establishments in Manchester, or in towns situate within a radius of twelve miles thereof, £3. 3s.

"2. All other *persons*, £2. 2s.

"Foreign *gentlemen*, properly introduced, may have tickets available for one month on payment of 10s. 6d."

It appears from these rules that all persons except foreign women may become subscribers to the Exchange, and are at liberty to come on the boards daily for the purpose of transacting business. Now, I am not going to say that women have no business capacity merely because they are women. Not at all. Women are in the habit of managing hotels, conducting theatres, keeping schools and shops, managing farms, and following other occupations, but the very idea of their coming on 'Change daily, and haggling with men over bargains and sales of yarns, shirtings, and all the various goods sold on that mart, is positively appalling. I, for one, feel that I should succumb at once. I wonder how all the large buyers and sellers who attend 'Change would like to be dodged up and down the room by a bevy of women. I, for one, should feel very much inclined to flee from temptation, like a well-known character mentioned in the Old Testament. Why, we should have no better chance in dealing on 'Change with women than a man has with a woman in a match at fisticuffs. She is at liberty to scratch his face, tear out his hair, and bite, but if he retaliates in mere self-defence he is put down as a wife-beater and a brute. I hope Mr. Murray Gladstone and his colleagues will consider the matter, and take precautions to prevent the Exchange being taken by the Amazonian Phalanx, by a *coup-de-main*. Only fancy wives, daughters, and sweethearts running about in search of their respective properties on the Exchange. Words are weak to picture the consequences of such a catastrophe.—I am, sir, yours,

JOB CAUDLE, JUN.

[We think our correspondent may stay his alarm. The invasion of women on the Exchange would be simultaneously accompanied by such an exodus of the male subscribers that we feel satisfied the directors dare not take the idea into their consideration.—ED. *Sphinx*.]

THEATRE ROYAL, MANCHESTER.

ON SATURDAY EVENING, April 8, at Half-past Seven, will be produced the Grand Historical Drama, KENILWORTH. New Scenery, Sumptuous Costumes, and Decorations. Box office open from eleven till two.

PRINCE'S THEATRE, MANCHESTER.

Proprietors, the Prince's Theatre Company, Limited. This Theatre will remain Closed until EASTER MONDAY, April 10, when MR. SOTHERN will commence an Engagement for Twelve Nights only, in H. J. Byron's New Drama, AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN. Box Office open daily from Eleven till Two

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GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 1871.

ROYAL POMONA PALACE.

TWO BANDS.

EASTER MONDAY,

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Admission, 6d.; after 4 p.m. on Friday the 7th and Easter Monday, 1s.; Saturday, 1s. after six p.m. No extra charge to the Music-hall on any of the above days.

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whose performances on the Tight Rope, à la Blondin, have been productive of the most intense astonishment to crowded audiences during the past week. Also, Messrs. TOWNSEND and GRAHAM, Eccentric Ethiopians, from the Oxford, London; Miss MARION ISAACS, to whom an ovation is nightly accorded; Mr. MARK ALBERTS, Comedian and Author; Miss JANET RICHARDS, Serio-comic; Mr. RICHARD HALES, Comic; GRAND BALLET, by a Troupe, 16 in number, &c.

Monday next, return of the MARVELLOUS LENTONS, Premier Gymnasts of the world, who created such a furore on the occasion of their last visit to Manchester.

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Our SEMOLINA is the staple food in France, Russia, Spain, Italy, &c., and will soon be that of England. It has obtained

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During the last thirty-five years they have proved their value in thousands of instances in diseases of the Head, Chest, Bowels, Liver, and Kidneys; and in all skin complaints are one of the best medicines known.
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